

ART. IV.—*Proceedings of the Asiatic Society.*

(Wednesday Evening, the 5th February, 1840.)

The Proceedings of the last Meeting were read.

His Excellency Sir Jasper NICOLLS, Commander-in-Chief, &c. &c. and Maharajah RAHMUT ALI KHAN, proposed at the last Meeting, were ballotted for, and duly elected Members of the Society.

The Society then proceeded to the election of Vice-Presidents and the Committee of Papers for the ensuing year, when the following gentlemen were chosen:—

Vice-Presidents.

The Honorable Sir J. P. GRANT.	The Honorable H. T. PRINSEP, Esq.
Colonel D. McLEOD.	The Honorable Sir H. SETON.

Members of the Committee of Papers.

W. GRANT, Esq.	Dr. D. STEWART.
Major W. N. FORBES.	D. HARE, Esq.
Dr. J. M'CLELLAND.	H. TORRENS, Esq.
Dr. N. WALLICH.	Dr. GRANT.

Mr. James COLQUHOUN proposed by Mr. SUTHERLAND, seconded by Dr. O'SHAUGHNESSY.

Captain SWETENHAM proposed by Major FORBES, seconded by Mr. SUTHERLAND.

C. K. ROBISON, Esq. proposed by Major FORBES, seconded by Mr. SUTHERLAND.

Mr. Thomas Charles CADOGAN proposed by Mr. BAGSHAW, seconded by Sir H. SETON.

Mr. R. H. MATHEWS proposed by Mr. BAGSHAW, seconded by Mr. H. T. PRINSEP.

The officiating Secretary informed the meeting that the Committee of Papers propose M. RENAUD as an Honorary Member, in succession to the late illustrious M. SILVESTRE DE SACY.

Read the following letter from Professor H. H. WILSON, dated East India House, 3rd December 1839, intimating his having forwarded through Messrs. ALLEN and Co. the busts of Sir W. JONES and Mr. H. T. COLEBROOKE.

East India House, 3rd Dec. 1839.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have an opportunity of acknowledging your late, as well as your former overland letter at the same time. As the letter of the 27th August reached me this morning, just in time for to-morrow's mail, there will not be time to attend to any of its contents before the dispatch is made up, but I will make the inquiries respecting the anatomical plates without delay. There would be no difficulty in printing the work altogether in this country, and both for the sake of science and my friend MODHUSUDAN GUPTA I should willingly act as editor; he would probably, however, prefer correcting his own work.

I have recently dispatched to you, through Messrs. ALLEN and Co., the busts of SIR W. JONES and MR. COLEBROOKE, which I doubt not will afford the Society much satisfaction. The bill remitted by you of 136*l.* has been realised, but the charge is a trifle more, being 142*l.* 10*s.* including the expense of reducing the bust of Sir W. JONES from the more colossal proportions of the statue in St. Paul's, and the expense of packing. I have paid the balance. The funds you have placed at my disposal will probably allow it to be deducted from them without inconvenience, if not, I can draw upon the Society for the amount.

MR. JAMES PRINSEP, I am sorry to state, continues in the same condition. There is no sensible improvement, but he is not apparently worse than he was six months ago.

Yours very sincerely,

H. H. WILSON.

To Dr. O'SHAUGHNESSY.

Resolved—That the amount advanced by Professor WILSON, for the purposes above mentioned, be forthwith remitted to him, with a suitable acknowledgment of the trouble he has taken in forwarding the busts.

Library.

Read a letter from the Secretary to the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries of Copenhagen, acknowledging the receipt of two specimens of ancient warlike weapons, presented by the Society through Dr. CANTOR, and intimating his having forwarded several articles for the use of the Society.

*Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries,
Copenhagen, 18th October, 1838.*

DEAR SIR,—We received by Dr. CANTOR your letter of 18th October last year, together with two specimens of ancient warlike weapons of copper, for our Museum. These we consider as of importance for our collection, and we shall take a future opportunity of writing more particularly on this subject. It would be very interesting if we could obtain a few more such matters of different sorts from India. Dr. CANTOR is a good judge of northern antiquities, and knows what will be of greatest interest to us in a scientific point of view.

I take the present opportunity to inform you, that I have dispatched from our Society to yours the following articles, which I hope will arrive safely.

By Peter HANSEN, Esq. Chief of the Establishment at Serampore (8th November, 1837.)—

The Annals of the R. S. N. A. 1836-1837, &c.

By Capt. RABE, to the care of Colonel REHLING, Governor of Tranquebar (18th April, 1838, and 18th October, 1838.)—

1. My work entitled, "Antiquites Americæ," published by our Society.
2. My Memoir, separately published in French "Sur la découverte de l'Amérique au dixième siècle."
3. My general Chart or Map, in illustration of the voyages of discovery to America, performed by the Scandinavians.
4. My special Map of Greenland.
5. Sundry other Maps published by the Society.
6. Some facsimiles of Icelandic Vellum Codices (skinnbækr.)
7. R. K. RASK'S Samlede Afhandlinger, 3 die deel.

The great importance of the literature of India to the Scandinavian north, and conversely the importance of that of the latter to India, prompts to a more intimate connexion of our Societies.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

With sentiments of respect and esteem,

Your most obedient servant,

JAS. PRINSEP, Esq.

Secy. As. Soc. Bengal.

CHAS. C. RAFRY, *Secretary. R. S. N. A.*

Library.

Read a letter from J. P. GRANT, Esq. officiating Secretary to the Government of India, Revenue Department, forwarding the following Books:—

Illustrations of Indian Botany, No. 12.

Dr. WIGHT'S Illustrations of Indian Plants, Nos. 11 and 12.

Read a letter from the Messrs. BOWDITCH, sons of the late Mr. N. BOWDITCH, forwarding for presentation the 4th volume of the "Mécannique Céleste, by LA PLACE," translated by their father, with a commentary.

Boston, August 18th, 1839.

SIR,—We send you, for the use of the Royal Asiatic Society, the first and last volumes of our father's commentary on the "Mécannique Céleste".

Before his death Mr. BOWDITCH prepared a few notes to the fifth volume, but they are imperfect, and therefore will not be published.

May we be allowed to refer to your notice the Appendix to the memoir of the translation, wherein you will find the disposition we have made of his library. In England our determination to make the "Bowditch Library" a free public institution, has been received with approbation by Sir JOHN HERSCHEL and others, and therefore we have taken the liberty of mentioning it to you.

We remain respectfully, yours,

N. J. BOWDITCH,

J. BOWDITCH,

F. D. BOWDITCH,

W. G. BOWDITCH,

Children of Nathaniel BOWDITCH.

To the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

Resolved—That the thanks of the Asiatic Society be conveyed to the Messrs. BOWDITCH, for their valuable donation; and that the Society further offer their cordial approval of the generous resolution regarding the disposal of the Bowditch Library.

Read a letter from Major JERVIS, Provisional Surveyor General, conveying a brochure by M. REINHARD.

Bombay, 10th Dec. 1839.

SIR,—On my way through France by the overland route to this country, I was charged by my distinguished friend Monsieur REINHARD, Membre de l'Institut, to present the accompanying volume in his name to the Asiatic Society of Bengal. And although not as yet a member of your distinguished body, I venture to assure you

of the very warm interest which he and many other celebrated orientalists in France, Members of the French Institute, take in every thing connected with the objects of your Society.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

To the Secy. Asiatic Society.

T. B. JERVIS, Major of Engineers,
appointed Provisionally Surv. Gen.

Read a letter to the President from M. DUTROUILLY, Treasurer of the Académie Royale de Bordeaux, presenting copies of the Actes de la Société, requesting the Journal in exchange, and inquiring after the state of Mr. Jas. PRINSEP's health.

Académie Royale des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de Bordeaux.

MONSIEUR,

Bordeaux, le 28 Aout, 1839.

L' Académie me charge de vous adresser les deux premiers numéros de ses Actes, elle vous prie de les offrir, de sa part, à la Savante Compagnie que vous présidez, elle se fera un vrai plaisir de lui adresser régulièrement les fascicules à fur et à mesure qu'ils paroîtront, elle espère que la Société Asiatique voudra bien lui continuer l'envoi de son journal.

L' Académie me charge aussi, Monsieur, de vous adresser un exemplaire de ses Actes, elle vous prie de l'agréer comme un hommage rendu à votre zèle éclairé pour les Sciences et les Lettres.

L' Académie a appris avec peine que l'honorable Monsieur PRINSEP l'un de vos Membres avait été dangereusement malade, comme elle n'a reçu aucune nouvelle de sa santé, et qu'elle à appris seulement qu'il avait été au Cap pour la retablir; y auroit il de l'indiscretion, Monsieur, à vous prier de vouloir nous donner de ses nouvelles. Le service qu'a rendu à la science M. PRINSEP, le rend cher à tous ceux qui la cultivent, et particulièrement à l' Académie.

Veillez, je vous prie, Monsieur, agréer et faire agréer à la Savante Société Asiatique l' assurance de la haute considération avec laquelle J'ai l' honneur d'être.

Monsieur,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,

DUTROUILLY,

Trésorier de l' Académie Royale des Sciences

Belles Lettres et Arts de Bordeaux.

Resolved unanimously,—That the thanks of the Society be offered to the Académie de Bordeaux, and the Journal regularly forwarded as desired. The Secretary was further instructed to communicate to M. DUTROUILLY the latest intelligence regarding Mr. PRINSEP.

The following Books were presented :—

Outlines of the Topography and Statistics of the Southern Districts of Oudh and of the Cantonment of Sultanpore, Oudh, by Dr. D. BUTTER, — *by the Author.*

Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, vol. 18, in 2 parts, — *by the Academy.*

Description of an Observatory established at Travandrum, by His Highness the Rajah of Travancore, by John CALDECOTT, Esq. Astronomer to His Highness, — *by the Author.*

Annuaire des Marées des Côtes de France pour L'an 1839, publié au Dept. de la Marine. Par A. M. R. CHAYALLON.

Mémoire Sur les Divers Moyens de Se Procurer Une Base. Par A. M. R. CHAYALLON.

Nieuwe Verhandelingen der Erste Klasse, Van het Konin Glijk Nederlandse Institut, vol. 6 and 7.

Solemnia Natalitia Regis Augustissimi ac Potentissimi Frederici Wilhelmi III. ac Aug. III edited by Professor A. G. SCHLEGEL, Bonn 1839,—*by the Author.*

Mémoire sur le système Grammatical des Langues. Par M. P. et Du Ponceau, L.L.D.—*by the Author.*

The American Almanac and Repository for 1839—*by the American Philosophical Society.*

The East Indian Journal, No. 2, by R. C. WOODS, L.L.D.—*by the Author.*

A Sketch of the Argument for Christianity and against Hinduism, (*Sanscrit*) by J. MUIR, Esq. B.C.S.—*by the Author.*

Meteorological Register for December, 1839—*by the Surveyor General.*

The following books were received from the booksellers :—

Journal des Savans, for May and June, 1839.

Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia—History ; vol. 2.

Illustrations of Ornithology, by JARDINE and SELBY, purchased from a number for Co's. Rs. 100.

Literary.

Mr. Secretary PRINSEP forwarded on the part of Government the following papers for publication in the Society's Transactions, or in its Journal :—

Dr. J. W. HELFER'S third and fourth Report on Tenasserim, the surrounding nations, inhabitants—natives and foreigners, character, morals and religion.

Dr. RICHARDSON'S Proceedings on his Mission to Siam and the Shan states, with a Map of Siam.

Dr. CAMPBELL'S Notes on the Mechis, with a Vocabulary of their language.

The officiating Secretary apprized the Meeting of his having received from Lieut. T. HUTTON the first part of his "Journal of a trip through Kunawur, Hungrung, and Spiti," to the expenses of which the Society had contributed a sum of 1000 Rs. pursuant to the resolution passed at the Meeting held on 1st Nov. 1837, (J. A. S. vol. 6 p. 898.)

Mr. J. W. LAIDLAY forwarded a paper on Mohammedan Coins.

Museum.

The officiating Secretary then requested the attention of the Meeting to a very important dispatch recently received from the Court of Directors.—This dispatch rendered it necessary to assign 250 rupees per mensem to the salary of a Curator.—The Committee of Papers had taken the subject into their serious consideration, and their Minutes are accordingly appended to the official letter.

To W. B. O'SHAUGHNESSY, Esq. M.D.

Officiating Secretary to the Asiatic Society.

No. 1280.

General Dept.

Letter from the Honble. Sir E. RYAN, Kt. President of the Asiatic Society, dated 21st June, 1837.

Ditto to ditto, dated 28th June, No. 261.

Ditto from Secretary Asiatic Society, 10th July.

Ditto to ditto, dated 26th ditto, No. 328.

Ditto from ditto dated 12th ditto, 1838.

Ditto to ditto, dated 18th ditto, No. 844.

(Para: 81 to 87)

SIR,—With reference to the correspondence noted in the margin, I am directed to transmit to you, for the information and guidance of the Society, the accompanying Extract from letter No. 17, of 1839, from the Honorable the Court of Directors, in the Public Department, dated 18th September.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
26th December, 1839.

H. T. PRINSEP,
Secy. to Govt. of India.

Extract from letter No. 17 of 1839, from the Honorable the Court of Directors in the Public Department, dated the 18th September.

Applications from the Asiatic Society of Calcutta to the Government for assistance.

Letter of 30th Aug. 1837.

Forwarding correspondence with Sir Edward Ryan, the President of the Society, soliciting the aid of Government to the amount of rupees 200 per mensem, in maintaining the museum of antiquities and natural history already commenced by the Society, but which must fail without such aid; also requesting permission to purchase antiquities, manuscripts, and objects of natural history and science to the extent of rupees 800 per mensem, on the engagement that the objects shall be placed at the disposal of the Government if the Court should decline to sanction the measure. The subscription of rupees 200 per mensem was sanctioned, and it was intimated, with regard to the latter application, that the Government declined a fixed grant, but would be ready to receive recommendations for the purchase of objects of more than common interest.

Letter of 12th Sept. 1838.

Reporting that the Government had acceded to the application of the Society by giving retrospec-

Para. 81. Your letter of the 30th August, 1837, forwards an application from the Asiatic Society of Calcutta soliciting the aid of the Government for the extension and maintenance of their Library and Museum, submitted to you with a letter from Sir E. Ryan, the President of the Society.

82. The objects of the Society, as set forth in their resolution of the 7th June, 1837, and their President's address, are the means of providing for the services of a professional naturalist to superintend and systematize their collections—of defraying the cost of preserving—of displaying the collections of curious and instructive articles already made—and of procuring additional objects illustrative of the geography, antiquities, statistics, mineralogy, conchology, botany, and natural history of India. In order to accomplish these purposes they estimate that in addition to their own available resources, an annual expenditure of 10,000 rupees is necessary. Although however specifying this sum as the amount of the aid which they are desirous of receiving, they leave it to you to fix the extent of any grant which you may deem it expedient to afford.

83. In your reply to the President of the Society you acknowledge the claims of the Asiatic Society of Bengal to the gratitude of the public, both in Asia and in Europe, for the persevering and successful efforts it has made, for more than half a century, to investigate and illustrate the literature, science, and natural and artificial productions of the East. You recognize the advantages which may

tive effect to the monthly allowance of rupees 500 granted by the Court for the publication of oriental works, as the Society had published several works before the receipt of the Court's sanction, and had thereby incurred a debt of rupees 2,500.

be expected to result from the extension of the Society's Library and Museum, and you admit the impossibility of this extension being effected, unless the Society be aided liberally by the Government, in like manner as similar institutions in Europe are supported by the Public Treasury. At the same time you declare yourselves precluded from giving an immediate sanction to the specific annual grant suggested by the Society in this instance, without previous reference being made to us, engaging to support such reference with your recommendation.

84. In a subsequent address from the Society, dated 10th July 1837, you were solicited, pending the result of the reference to us, to assist the Society with a monthly grant of 200 rupees, and a further sum of 800 rupees, a month, for the purchase of additions to the Library and Museum, on the condition that if the disbursement should be disapproved of, the articles so purchased should be relinquished to the Government. With the first of these requests you complied, but declined to make any specific appropriation of funds for the objects proposed in the latter suggestion, although you stated your willingness to receive from the Society recommendations for the purchase, or other procurement, of such articles as the Society might think it desirable to possess, and provided they were not of a perishable description.

85. The independent and useful activity of the Asiatic Society of Bengal during so long a period, entitles it justly to your consideration, and looking to it as the only institution in India, which offers any analogy to the great national libraries and museums of Europe, it is a legitimate object of public support. We therefore approve of the aid and encouragement which you have given. We think, however, that the extent to which you have gone is fully adequate to all purposes of public utility. The Society is already in possession of a library and museum of some extent, and the additions that may be made to either must be occasional and progressive. It does not happen in India as in Europe, that large public or private collections of a rare and valuable description are offered for sale, and all accessions which the Society will have an opportunity of acquiring must be of limited extent and incidental occurrence. From the character too of the persons who are likely to contribute to the Society's collections, it is very improbable that a pecuniary equivalent will in all cases be desired, and it seems to us, on various grounds, unnecessary and objectionable to assign to the Society a permanent grant for the purpose of effecting occasional purchases. When an application from the Society comes before you for any definite outlay, it will be time enough to take into consideration the expediency of granting the particular assistance that may then be required. We shall not object to your granting to the Society funds for special purchases, as occasions arise, as far as may be compatible with a due regard to public economy. On all such occasions, you will forward to our Museum a selection from the articles which may have been so procured.

86. The more immediate and permanent want of the Society is the superintendence of a qualified person to preserve its collections, and arrange them in a scientific and systematic manner, so that they may be readily consulted, and be at all times subservient to the diffusion of useful knowledge; such a person may no doubt be met with at the Presidency, and we do not object to your allowing to the Society the monthly sum of 200 or 250 rupees as the salary for his services, with a further sum of 50 rupees a month for the cost of preparing specimens, and maintaining the

collections in order. It would however be an unprofitable waste of money to attempt the preservation of many of the objects of natural history in the climate of Bengal, and these when considered valuable should be transmitted to our Museum.

87. We do not object to the retrospective effect given to the appropriation of 500 rupees a month for the publication of oriental books, under the circumstances stated; and we take this opportunity of intimating our wish, that as soon as the work in hand shall have been completed, arrangements should be adopted for applying the grant to the printing of the text of the Vedas, with a commentary, as the oldest and most authentic record of the language and religion of the Hindus, and therefore indispensable to the history of opinion and of man.

(True Extract)

H. T. PRINSEP,

Secretary to the Government of India.

Minute by Sir EDWARD RYAN.

It appears from the copy of the dispatch of the Court of Directors, communicated to the Society by the direction of Government, that 200 or 250 rupees are to be allowed monthly to the Society for the salary of a qualified person to preserve its collections, and arrange them in a scientific and systematic manner, and an additional 50 rupees a month for the cost of preparing specimens, and maintaining the collections in order. I think it is desirable that the Society should state the time they will require any Curator they may appoint to devote to his charge, and the periods at which he should report to the Society upon the state and condition of their Museum. I think upon the fixed salary that will now be devoted to the person, that the Society might reasonably expect two or three hours in each day shall be devoted to the Museum—that reports should be made at each monthly Meeting—and the office of Curator should be held, like most of the offices of the Societies, for the year only; that is, subject to annual re-election. If the Society approves of the conditions there named, I would further propose, that the office of Curator be offered, in the first instance, to Dr. M'CLELLAND, who has so kindly, for some time past, discharged the duties of Curator without salary. If he will accept, the office, I am sure the Society will be happy to avail itself of his most valuable services. I beg our Secretary to circulate with Mr. Secretary Prinsep's letter and enclosure this memorandum.

EDWARD RYAN.

January 25th 1840.

Circular from officiating Secretary, to the Committee of Papers, Asiatic Society.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg leave to circulate an important dispatch from the Honorable the Court of Directors, regarding our Museum, and directing a salary of 250 rupees per mensem to be paid to the Curator. I also circulate a Minute on the subject by our President.

I take the liberty of expressing my concurrence in the opinions of the President, and at the same time my hope, that Dr. M'CLELLAND may be enabled to command sufficient leisure for the duties of the office. It is quite impossible at present to find a competent and available individual to fill Dr. M'CLELLAND's place. The accomplished officers who have recently entered the service (I allude chiefly to Drs. WALKER, JAMESON, and CANTOR) are too eagerly sought for by the Government for scientific missionary duties to justify our indulging the least hope of their being soon placed in Calcutta.

I am satisfied, at the same time, that should Dr. M'CLELLAND feel his time pre-occupied to such an extent as to prevent his attending closely to the Museum, he would be the first to propose measures for the securing the entire services of a competent person. I think with the good salary we are now enabled to offer, that we can very easily procure such an individual from England. I accordingly propose,—

1. That in the event of Dr. M'CLELLAND declining the curatorship on the terms allowed by the Honorable Court, and under the stipulations of our President, the Committee of Papers address (through the President) an application to the proper scientific personages at home, requesting their selection and appointment of a competent naturalist for the office of Curator on a salary of 300*l.* per annum.

2. That the Committee of Papers at the same time forward a memorandum of the Curator's duties.

3. That the person appointed in England be bound to serve the Society for five years.

4. That an outfit allowance of five hundred rupees be allowed him, and his passage paid for, and that the necessary funds for these expenses be provided by allowing the Honorable Court's monthly donations to accumulate from the date on which these resolutions may be agreed to, until the arrival of the Curator.

5. Lastly, that these resolutions be submitted to the consideration of the next general meeting, with the recommendation of the Committee in their favor.

Your's faithfully,

W. B. O'SHAUGHNESSY.

26th January, 1840.

Minute by Dr. M'CLELLAND.

Having fully considered the responsibilities of the office of Curator, I shall be happy to continue to discharge its duties, if it be desirable to the Society I should do so.

As the Museum of Natural History at the India House is alluded to in the Court's dispatch, I take the liberty of putting into the circular a letter from Dr. HORSFIELD, the superintendent of that collection, by which it will be seen that the Court of Directors are promoting at the India House the very same object that we have here in view, in endeavouring to establish a collection of natural objects.

Under these circumstances, it will no doubt be agreeable both to the objects and wishes of the Asiatic Society, to promote as much as possible, without detriment to our own Museum, the objects of the home collection, with which view the grant of 200 to 250 rupees as salary to a Curator, seems partly to have been made.

In my opinion the great, and indeed the only security the Society can possess in regard to a Curator, is scientific reputation; for without acquirements of a high order as a naturalist, (by which I do not mean a stuffer, nor the mere namer of objects) his assiduity would be of no avail, while his monthly reports, were he to engage to supply them, might bring discredit on the Society.

It is for these reasons, and because of a want of confidence in my fitness for an office so interesting and important as our curatorship is now likely to become, that I cannot enter into any engagements as to periodical reports, or hours of attendance.

We may at present have few in Calcutta qualified for the office, but of the number of eminently qualified individuals who have recently entered the Medical Department, we may hope that ere long the services of some of them will be required in Calcutta,

when our Museum will have the aid of curators of far higher qualifications than the Society could obtain from Europe for any small sum we can ever hope to be able to offer.

29th January, 1840.

J. M'CLELLAND.

P. S.—I was afraid that in sending home for a Curator it might be forgotten that we have eminently qualified persons in India, and am therefore the better pleased to find that since my remarks were circulated, the names of three to whom I particularly alluded, have been incorporated in the Secretary's Minute. I am however, very sanguine as to soon seeing several qualified scientific men in Calcutta, for offices of this nature.

J. M'CLELLAND.

Minute by Mr. H. T. PRINSEP.

I wish to see this question fairly discussed at the meeting on Wednesday next. I see no other arrangement that can be proposed, except to place Dr. M'CLELLAND in the office for the coming year; but I think unless he will pledge himself to daily attendance, and monthly reports, that he should be considered, as he himself suggests, as officiating until we can find a qualified person who will give more time to it.

I think with him, that it will be preferable to look out for a Curator amongst the highly qualified persons we have in India, rather than take the chance of obtaining a good man from England. 300*l.* per annum, or 250 per mensem, is not enough to satisfy a man of science. Indents for Editors, and even for Schoolmasters, from Europe have not ordinarily been successful.

30th January, 1840.

H. T. PRINSEP,
D. STEWART,
W. N. FORBES,
D. MCLEOD.

On the day of the meeting Dr. M'CLELLAND submitted the following additional Minute.

As the Museum at the India House is alluded to in the dispatch of the Honorable the Court of Directors, No. 17 of 1839, dated the 18th September, the following remarks on that collection is extracted from a private letter addressed by Dr. HORSFIELD to Mr. M'CLELLAND, Bengal Medical Service, dated Library, East India House, August 31st, 1839.

“The Museum itself is not very extensive, but it is nevertheless of much importance in connexion with Indian zoology, as it contains several extensive local collections.

“It consists mainly of the following Faunas, which are more or less perfect:—

“*Firstly.* A collection of upwards of 200 species of birds from Java, and a proportional number of quadrupeds. This was formed by myself, and brought to England in 1819, when it constituted the nucleus of our Zoological collection.

“*Secondly.* We have a pretty complete series of Birds collected in Sumatra by Sir STAMFORD RAFFLES, and some of his Mammalia.

“*Thirdly.* We have a similar collection made by the late Dr. FINLAYSON in Siam and in the Indian Archipelago.

“*Fourthly.* We have a nearly complete series of Mammalia and Birds collected by Colonel SYKES in the Dekun, of the importance and extent of which you can judge by the respective catalogues contained in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society for 1831 and 1832.

“*Fifthly.* We have a few specimens from China, Nepal, and the Upper Provinces of Bengal, but these are imperfect and fragmentary.

“To these has now been added a series, almost complete, of the Mammalia and Birds collected by yourself in Assam, which have been mounted, and form a valuable addition to the specimens exhibited in our Museum.

“All these separate Faunas are neatly arranged in our natural history department, which consists of a large room well lighted, and provided with excellent cabinets for the preservation of the subjects.

“This Museum I may say is established on a modest scale, and without the pretension to extent or elegance of the national collections (such as the British or Hunterian, or even the Zoological Societies) but our specimens are generally good, being prepared by the best London artists, and my endeavour is to have them correctly labelled.

“Our collection consists mainly of Quadrupeds and Birds; but we have also a small collection of Fishes, Reptiles, and Serpents, which have recently been examined by Dr. CANTOR, who has prepared a list of them, agreeably to which they are arranged.

“It is my intention as soon as possible to prepare a general list of the Mammalia and Birds which are arranged in our Museum for transmission to you, so that you may form an accurate idea of what we have, and be enabled to judge of what we want.

“I have no doubt the nature and importance of natural history is more considered and appreciated now, than it was in former times; and I cherish the hope that the countenance and support of Government will ere long be extended to it in an effectual way; but this I can at present only allude to as a wish or expectation. Meanwhile I may enumerate some of the subjects which would be particularly desirable. We want, for instance, many of the birds of Bengal. All the rarer species, and some of the more common (of these I hope soon to send you a provisional list); we want generally the Birds of Silhet, the Garrow Hills, Tenasserim, Arracan, Burmah, &c. &c. and duplicates of the new and of all the rarer species discovered by you in Assam.

“We want a complete series of the Birds of Nepal, also Mammalia; the smaller species would suit our purpose best, as we can more easily accommodate them. But above all, and especially, we want a large, full, and complete collection of all the *Vespertilionidæ*, or *Bats* of India. This is the most important family, as it has never been sought after; and I beg and entreat you to have a large collection made generally throughout all India; and I need not point out to you the localities where these animals are most likely to be met with”

Here Dr. HORSFIELD enters into particulars regarding the genera and species.

“But besides these it is in the branch of *Entomology* that I would at present strongly solicit contributions to the Company’s Museum. I am more anxious on this head, as I have succeeded in bringing an extensive collection of Insects from Java in excellent condition, and with the exception of these, and the collection of Colonel SYKES, we have absolutely nothing from Bengal or from India generally.” On this subject Dr. HORSFIELD delicately alludes to the probability of gentlemen connected with

missions still holding collections of Insects unappropriated, under the supposition, perhaps, that such objects would be less appreciated than the large animals; on the contrary, Dr. HORSFIELD states that contributions to this department of the Museum would be as likely as any other means to promote the interests of science, and to secure the approval of those who are interested in the collection at the India House.

With regard to Insects. The public collections which remain, I believe, unappropriated, are those made by Dr. WALLICH, Mr. GRIFFITH, and myself, when employed on the Assam deputation, and Dr. HELFER's collection. That which was made by the Assam deputation is still, I believe, at the Botanic Garden, and like Dr. HELFER's collection has not yet been transferred to the Government. With regard to the former, perhaps the Society has no authority to interfere; but as the Society has been authorized to take one series of Dr. HELFER's collection for our own Museum, and to select another for that of the India House, it might be necessary to address Dr. HELFER on the subject, particularly as his collection of birds for the Honorable Court has been packed up for some time in the Museum, and are only detained till the insects which have not yet been submitted to the Society should accompany them.

The large collections of birds and insects made by Captain PEMBERTON during his mission to Boutan, and the officers who accompanied him on that occasion, have been long almost unobserved in the Museum, owing to the late repairs of the house. The greater part of the birds composing that collection were previously in our possession, but such as were new to it were transferred to our cabinets, and the rest enclosed in cases for transmission to the India House. The insects of the same collection which are numerous, and no doubt rich in undescribed forms, are also in course of being dispatched with the birds; a series having been reserved for our own collection. The pains taken during Captain PEMBERTON's Journey, to mark the localities in which the different objects were collected, cannot be too highly applauded, especially as this very important circumstance has been hitherto altogether neglected on such occasions.

Mr. LYELL in a letter addressed to Mr. M'CLELLAND, dated 7th September 1839, states, that he is very anxious for accurate information respecting the geography of living *testacea* and Indian *tertiary* shells, and if furnished with duplicates from the Museum of the Asiatic Society, proposes in return to supply the Society with fossil and recent shells in exchange.

The Society, it is to be regretted, has few fossil shells from Indian beds, and a very imperfect collection of recent species. Indeed the little attention that has been paid to these important subjects in India, seems to have induced collectors to send their contributions elsewhere. Several members, and others interested in the advancement of science, are most favourably placed on the Malay coast, at various points from Chittagong to Mergui, and we may look, I trust, with confidence for large collections from this quarter in the peculiar department alluded to. I have myself been already indebted for a miscellaneous collection of shells from Dr. HELFER, and slight contributions have been made to our Museum from time to time by different individuals; but I question if we have as yet a tenth part of the species of the Bay, while we are altogether without the corals, polypes, and radiata, so abundant in all the Eastern seas.

Mr. A. P. PHAYRE, assistant to the commissioner of Arracan, kindly sent me some time since a few interesting specimens of the rocks in the vicinity of Akyab, which are perforated to the height of six feet above the greatest elevation of spring tides, the same as beneath the level of the water, by a species of *Pholas*. Mr. PHAYRE justly

ascribes this to a change of level in the rocks composing this part of the coast, and regards the perforations as identical to those which have been observed in the sandstone at Cherra Ponji. With regard to the Cherra Ponji rocks, I am indebted to Mr. H. WALKER for an observation of very great importance when observing the number of *Echinidæ* in my collection from that quarter; he suggested the probability of the elongated moulds contained in what seemed to be perforations, being nothing more than the spines of a *Cidaris*, a species of *Echinus*. On this subject, as well as the *Echinidæ* generally, which I find to be very abundant in the Cherra beds, I hope soon to have a communication to make, being now employed in an examination of the Indian species, particularly those which I have found fossil.

These departments of the animal kingdom are of the more importance to our collections, as we can hardly advance a single step in geology until our cabinets are complete, or nearly so, in recent species.

Mr. PHAYRE has liberally undertaken to collect for us at Akyab, but we require equally zealous correspondents at Chittagong, Kyuk Phyu, Sandoway, Moulmein, Mergue, and at all the different stations along the coast, before our Museum can be considered in a progressive state.

With regard to fossil species, our collection is equally defective; indeed so long as we are without a complete collection of recent shells, fossil species would be of little interest in our Museum. As a proof of the poverty of our collection, I may remark, that of one striking and numerous family, affording probably some hundred species, most of them found in the Indian seas, yet *two* species only are all we have in our Museum, and these from unknown localities, probably New South Wales.

As animals of this family have been found in a fossil state, in a bed of sand, reposing beneath the common soil of the Sylhet mountains, under circumstances which we are bound to investigate, the fact may induce those who reside along the coasts above alluded to, to contribute their share towards the inquiry by forwarding specimens of them to our Museum. The dried testa of *Echinida*, called *sea-eggs*, are very abundant, I understand from Captain BROWN, on the shores of Rambree Island, and all the islands from thence to the Straits, while the living animals usually named sea-hedgehogs, from the number of spines with which they are covered, may be had from rocks in the same vicinity. The bleacher shell is seldom perfect, so that the living animals when put fresh into spirits form the more valuable specimens; but from the ease with which the former may be collected and preserved, as well as from their beauty as mere ornaments, they ought to form a portion of every collection, and from the philosophical interest of the subject they would be a welcome addition to our Museum.

Enough I trust has been said to induce residents on the Malay coast and other situations where similar facilities are afforded, to enable the Society to avail itself of the offer of Mr. LYELL, and at the same time to enlarge, or rather form its own collections of Indian species.

The interest now awakening in Europe regarding the natural history of this country, is calculated to produce a more powerful effect in exciting a spirit of inquiry here, than any arguments that could be urged on the spot. Thus, we have not only a Museum at the India House, now opened for the exhibitions of animals collected in India, but the first philosophers are ready to co-operate with us and aid our inquiries.

In addition to the instances of this kind already referred to, Mr. E. CHARLESWORTH and Mr. S. V. WOOD have each presented us with collections of tertiary shells,

to facilitate our examination of the Cherra fossils. With a similar view Professor REINHARDT has presented the Society (through the medium of Dr. CANTOR, by whom they have been safely conveyed from Denmark to our Museum free of expense) with the valuable collection of skulls of *Cetacea* from Greenland, now on the table, to facilitate the examination of the fossil Mammalia that abound in several districts of India.

We cannot however flatter ourselves that any results we have yet attained are such as to entitle us to the aid of naturalists in Europe. I therefore refer the interest which the above marks of attention betoken in favor of our scientific movements, to the personal influence of one of our members, Dr. CANTOR, who has recently returned from Europe, where he met a reception for his labors among us, from philosophers of every rank, of which he may well be proud, and which cannot fail to produce a powerful effect on his future career in India.

Our scientific progress will however depend so much on the cultivation of a general intercourse with scientific individuals and Societies in other parts of the world, that we ought to take advantage of the occasion by meeting the views of those who are desirous of exchanging collections with us.

Indeed to attempt to establish a national Museum in India without this kind of co-operation, would be to reject what has been done in Europe, and to begin the study of the physical sciences as if nothing had been accomplished beyond the few scattered publications that reach India. It is by cultivating an interchange with other Museums, and thus introducing the known species of other countries as the standard of comparison for the elucidation of the unknown species of this, that we are to advance our own collections, and contribute most effectually to the general diffusion of knowledge, and the progress of science.

5th February, 1840.

J. M'CLELLAND.

Dr. M'CLELLAND then rose and addressed the meeting regarding the attendance of the curator for two hours a day, and a monthly report on the Museum, as insisted upon in the minute of the President, which he objected to. He objected to any stipulated period of daily attendance beyond what might be necessary to superintend the persons employed in the Museum, and of this the curator himself should be supposed the best judge. He has been in the habit of devoting more time than two hours, he might say even five hours, daily to the duties of the Museum, but that was at his own house, where he had painters and other facilities which the Museum did not afford, and where he would continue to employ himself pretty much in the same way whether appointed curator or not. As to reports, he also thought these should be left to the discretion of the curator, as it would be useless reporting unless there should happen to be something of interest to report about.

SIR EDWARD RYAN said, that he thought Dr. M'CLELLAND did not quite understand him by two hours a day; he did not mean that two hours should be given every day, but that if he could not give one, four hours could be devoted to it the next, and so on, only that on an average two hours daily, whether at home or at the Museum, should be required by the Society from the curator.

As to monthly reports, it was not absolutely necessary that a long report should be furnished every month; for some months there might not be any thing to report, when only a letter stating this circumstance would be all that would be required. Monthly reports were only necessary as public records for future reference for a history of the Museum, and also that they might have something which they could produce if called

on by the Government for the expenditure of the sum granted by the Honorable Court for this express purpose. He therefore begged to propose that the office be offered to Dr. M'CLELLAND on these stipulations, if he chose to accept of it.

Mr. H. T. PRINSEP thought it necessary to inquire, with reference to Dr. M'CLELLAND'S explanation of his views of the nature of a curator's office, whether it was intended to recognize the curator as entitled to remove to his own house any objects of natural curiosity or other articles he might desire. He thought that the recognition of such a privilege was inconsistent with the object of preserving always at hand for inspection every article obtained. He wished the rules of other Museums should be referred to, for of course it would be expected now that the Honorable Court had specifically assigned a sum for its maintenance, that the Society should conform to the practice of other similar institutions in Europe. Of course on the first arrival of any article, before it was classed and located in the Museum, the curator might do whatever was necessary to examine and test it, carrying it away if he pleased for the purpose. But when once placed in the Museum, Mr. PRINSEP thought the articles ought not on any account to be removed, and the rooms of the Society afforded facilities sufficient for copying and comparing in them, without any removal being necessary.

Sir E. RYAN then moved that the Committee of Papers be instructed to draw up rules on which the curatorship should be held, with the stipulation that two hours a day at least be allotted for the duties of the office—that reports be furnished monthly of the state of the Museum—and that no specimens be allowed to be removed from the Society's apartments. Similar rules in fact have invariably been observed by other Societies. The President further suggested, that the Committee do make their report on it at the next meeting. Dr. M'CLELLAND then said, that if it was intended that these rules should be strictly enforced, it would be the means of greatly limiting the endeavours of the curator, whoever he might be, for the interests of the Society; and he thought it as well, under these stipulations, to decline accepting of the situation.

Sir E. RYAN added that the Society were so sensible of the value of Dr. M'CLELLAND'S services, that no decision would be formed on his expressed refusal of the office until the next meeting.

The annual Report was then presented by the officiating Secretaries, but reserved for perusal at the next meeting.

The following letters from Dr. CANTOR were read.

SIR, Calcutta, January 25, 1840.

I take the liberty to call your attention to the following extract of a letter which I have received from Prof. REINHARDT, Superintendent of the Royal Museum at Copenhagen.

“ In the year 1823 or 1824, I presented a number of stuffed specimens of European, (mostly northern) birds to the Asiatic Society, Calcutta. From a Calcutta Journal I have learned, that the specimens had arrived in fine condition, and that the Society at their monthly meeting were pleased to pass a resolution, that a number of their duplicates of Indian birds were to be presented to me in return. I have however since then neither heard any thing concerning this matter, nor have I received the gift of the Society. If you therefore on your return to Calcutta could procure some informa-

tion as to what course has been pursued after the Society had passed the resolution, I shall feel much obliged."*

I beg leave to request that you will favour me with such information upon the subject as shall enable me to comply with the request of Professor REINHARDT.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

THEODORE CANTOR.

To the Curator, Asiatic Society's Museum.

SIR,

Calcutta, January 25, 1840.

In a letter from the Secretary, bearing the date of October 31st, 1837, Mr. JAS. PRINSEP expressed the Society's wish, that on my arrival in England I should purchase such works upon natural history for the Society as were most wanted in their library. To the number of works upon natural history which I have ordered Messrs. ALLEN and Co. to procure and dispatch to the Society, I beg to add the accompanying work upon *Infusoria*, by Professor EHRENBERG.

In the above mentioned letter, the Secretary further requested me to take charge of two duplicates from the Society's Museum, viz. a skull of an elephant, and a ditto of a rhinoceros, with a view to procure in exchange for those objects others, which from the knowledge I had obtained by arranging and making a catalogue of the Museum, I should conceive to be acceptable.

From Professor REINHARDT, Superintendent of the Royal Museum at Copenhagen, I have received in exchange the accompanying series of osteological preparations, which with the annexed list I have the honor of laying before the Society. The collection consists chiefly of northern Cetacea, a class of animals, which, from their locality, belong to the rarer objects in the European Museums, and which I conceive of double interest to our Museum, as affording means of comparison to students of the fossil Cetacea found in the Himalayan beds.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

THEODORE CANTOR.

List of osteological preparations received from the Royal Museum at Copenhagen, in exchange for two skulls from the Asiatic Society's Museum.

- | | | |
|-----|----|------------------------------------|
| No. | 1. | Canis lagopus, |
| „ | 2. | Ursus maritimus, |
| „ | 3. | Phoca hispida ♂ Adult, |
| „ | 4. | Phoca grœnlandica ♂ Old, |
| „ | 5. | Ditto ♀ Adult, |
| „ | 6. | Phoca vitulina ♂ Old, |
| „ | 7. | Ditto ♂ Young, |
| „ | 8. | Phoca barbata ♀ Adult, |
| „ | 9. | Cystiphora (Phoca) cristata ♂ Old, |

* *Note by the Curator.* The articles intended by the Society for Professor Reinhardt were made over to Dr. Wallich, I believe, who undertook to have them conveyed to Copenhagen.

- „ 10. Ditto ♀ Old,
 „ 11. Ditto ♂ Young,
 „ 12. Ditto (6 months old,)
 „ 13. *Trichechus rosmarus*. Adult,
 „ 14. Ditto Young,
 „ 15. *Delphinus phocæna*, Adult,
 „ 16. Ditto Young
 „ 17. *Delphinus globiceps*. Old,
 „ 18. *Delphinus (Delphinopterus) albicans*.

The specimens were procured in Greenland.

THEODORE CANTOR.

To the Curator, Asiatic Society's Museum.

We have been obliged to forego our intention of publishing COLONEL LUARD'S admirable sketch of the explosion of the "Equitable," it being quite impossible in Calcutta to communicate its effect by a stone drawing.—EDS.